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2,757.1 MPG Achieved at 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas(R)



A student team from Brazil celebrates a successful run at the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas, a fuel efficiency challenge where the winners achieve the farthest distance using the least amount of energy. This year's winning team reached 2,757.1 mpg at the event at the Auto Club Speedway in Southern California. (PRNewsFoto/SHELL)

HOUSTON, TX UNITED STATES



This could be the fuel tank of the future according to students competing at the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas challenge held at the Auto Club Speedway in Southern California on April 15-18, 2009. Many of the more than 500 students that competed from across North and South America used a similar size fuel tank that holds 250 mL. (PRNewsFoto/SHELL)

HOUSTON, TX UNITED STATES



Laval University prepares for their winning run at the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas challenge, earning 2,757.1 mpg. The student competition at the Auto Club Speedway in Southern California included 44 teams and 500 students from across North and South America. (PRNewsFoto/SHELL)

HOUSTON, TX UNITED STATES

Student-built, fuel-efficient prototype vehicle achieves highest distance using least amount of fuel

HOUSTON, April 19 /PRNewswire/ -- Distance, not speed, was the goal this weekend on the track at the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas(R), a challenge for students to design, build and test fuel-efficient vehicles that travel the farthest distance using the least amount of fuel. This year, more than 500 students from North and South America were on hand to stretch the boundaries of fuel efficiency. So who came out on top? The student team from Laval University, with an astonishing 2,757.1 miles per gallon, equivalent to 1,172.2 kilometres per liter, won the grand prize in the "Prototype" category. And in the "UrbanConcept" category - new to the Americas event this year - the team from Mater Dei High School took the grand prize by achieving 433.3 mpg, equivalent to 184.2 km/l.

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20090419/DA01236-a>)

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20090419/DA01236-b>)

(Photo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20090419/DA01236-c>)

With 44 participating teams at track competition was steep. This year's challenge brought together a number of returning teams determined to beat the 2,843 mpg (1,208 km/l) record set by Mater Dei High School (Evansville, Ind.) in 2008, combined with a number of new teams adding fresh innovation and vehicle designs to the competition.

"We knew coming into the challenge this year that we would have a lot to go up against," said David Vallee of Laval University. "But we had confidence in our vehicle and all the hard work that had gone into building it over the past year. We're just excited the long hours paid off and we were able to win the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas!"

"The Shell Eco-marathon is a platform for students to let their imaginations run wild," said Mark Singer, global project manager for the Shell Eco-marathon. "By encouraging these students to build vehicles with greater energy efficiency, we hope this will help inspire others; and together we can find solutions that will help meet the global energy challenge."

This year, student teams were invited to participate in either the Prototype or UrbanConcept categories. For the Prototype category, teams entered futuristic prototypes - streamlined vehicles focused on maximizing fuel efficiency through innovative design elements, such as drag reduction. For the UrbanConcept category, teams entered more "roadworthy" fuel-efficient vehicles. Aimed at meeting the real-life needs of drivers, these vehicles are closer in appearance to the cars seen on roads today. For both categories, teams could use any conventionally available energy source - including fuels such as diesel, gasoline and liquid petroleum gas (LPG), as well as alternative fuels such as hydrogen, biomass and solar.

The 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas roster contained 44 teams from six high schools and 29 universities from North and South America, including Brazil, Canada, Mexico and the United States. Additionally, a guest team from India joined the roster with their Prototype vehicle.

The Prototype entries included 28 vehicles powered by combustion engines, five by fuel cell/hydrogen technology, three by LPG, three by solar power, and two by diesel fuel. The UrbanConcept entries included two vehicles powered by combustion engines and one by solar power.

Category winners for the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas include:

Prototype

Grand Prize - Combustion Engine

With mileage of 2,757.1 mpg (1,172.2 kilometers per liter) the Alerion Supermileage team from Laval University in Quebec, Canada won a US\$5,000 grand prize with their vehicle, *NTF 3.0*.

Fuel Cell/Hydrogen

The Penn State University team from University Park, Pa. achieved 1,912.9 mpg (813.2 km/l) in its *Blood, Sweat & Gears* vehicle.

Solar Power

The Purdue Solar Racing team from Purdue University took first place with its solar vehicle, *Pulsar*, which achieved 4,913 mpg (2,088.7 km/l).

UrbanConcept

Grand Prize - Combustion Engine

With mileage of 433.3 mpg (184.2 kilometers per liter) the Mater Dei Supermileage Team from Mater Dei High School in Evansville, Ind. won a US\$5,000 grand prize with their vehicle, *Street Buggy*.

Special Awards for the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas

Achieving the best fuel economy in a category wasn't the only way to win at the 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas. Teams were also given the opportunity to compete for one or more Special Awards, including:

Eco-Design Award

A special "Eco-Design Award" was presented to the UCLA team for their Prototype design. Their special design not only contributed to the fuel efficiency of their vehicle, but incorporated recycled and eco-friendly materials into the vehicle and production process.

Safety

The "Safety Award" recognized three teams who made the most extensive efforts to comply with the safety regulations of the Shell Eco-marathon Americas. This award went to UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico), Grand Rapids Technical School and Loyola Marymount University. These teams all demonstrated safety as a top priority in vehicle designs and construction.

Technical Innovation

This award was presented to three teams who demonstrated outstanding initiative and technical ingenuity along with optimal use of new materials in the drive train, chassis, instrumentation and tires. First prize was awarded to Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, second prize to Purdue University and third prize to California Polytechnic State University.

Design

The 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas "Design Award" was presented to the Brazilian team from Minas Gerais State University. This award recognized their innovative design research related to ergonomics, aesthetics, choice of materials and technical feasibility. The originality and overall coherence of their design were also taken into account.

Communications

This award recognized the Dalhousie University team from Canada, who made outstanding communications efforts concerning the Shell Eco-marathon. All actions throughout the year are taken into account: participation at trade shows, creation of a Web site and all other activities that successfully promote the competition, its name, its founding principle, its educational aspects, etc. in the team's country of origin.

Best Team Spirit

The "Best Team Spirit Award" was presented to the George M. Schurr High School team who fostered cooperation and collaboration among their team and others at the competition. Not only did they demonstrate initiative to learn more about other teams and contribute to the morale at the competition, they lent a tire to another team and helped a team in need whose car wasn't ready to compete by loaning them one of their vehicles to participate in the challenge.

Perseverance in the Face of Adversity

The "Perseverance in the Face of Adversity Award" was presented to two teams - Chitkara Institute of Engineering & Technology in India and Louisiana State University. Both teams overcame many obstacles in order to make it to the Shell Eco-marathon Americas - the team from India not only traveled a very far distance to participate in the event, they also battled many issues with their vehicle, and the team from LSU overcame the loss of a team member, who passed away last year. The team dedicated their Shell Eco-marathon project to this team member, even naming their vehicle after her, *Ellen*.

The 2009 Shell Eco-marathon Americas event sponsors included Autodesk, Michelin, Pennzoil and SKF USA Inc. Event photos, complete results and videos are available at www.shell.com/ecomarathon. And for more information contact the Shell Media Line at 713-241-4544. For b-roll, visit www.badertv.com/09ecomarathon via login "shell," password "news."

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